

# ECSTASY

**The “New Age” designer  
drug**



# ECSTASY

## The "Killer" Drug

99 Ecstasy (MDMA) Tablets

Image © 2000 Erowid.org



# Ecstasy

- What is it?
- Why is it popular?
- What's the problem?
- Is it illegal? Can it be detected?



# Ecstasy – what is it?

- Stimulant and Hallucinogen
- Synthetic illegal drug
  - Sometimes adulterated with other drugs
  - Some Ecstasy deaths are actually amphetamine overdoses



# Terms for Ecstasy

XTC

bean

M

D

M

A

R

O

L

L

X

# Forms of Ecstasy



- **Fluid:**

Clear, put in water for cover up

- **Pill:**

Different shapes, colors, textures, etc

- **Powder:**

Normally a white powder, mixed in a fluid for consumption by mouth



# Why is it popular?

- Brings on intense feelings of well-being and love
- Alleged fewer side effects
- Ease of use – no smoking, snorting, or injecting
- Misperception that Navy Drug Labs don't check for Ecstasy– they do!
- RAVES – all night dance parties.



# Effects while under the influence

- Calm, relaxed, and friendly
- Touching, constant talking or laughing
- Fascination with sensations





# But other effects also

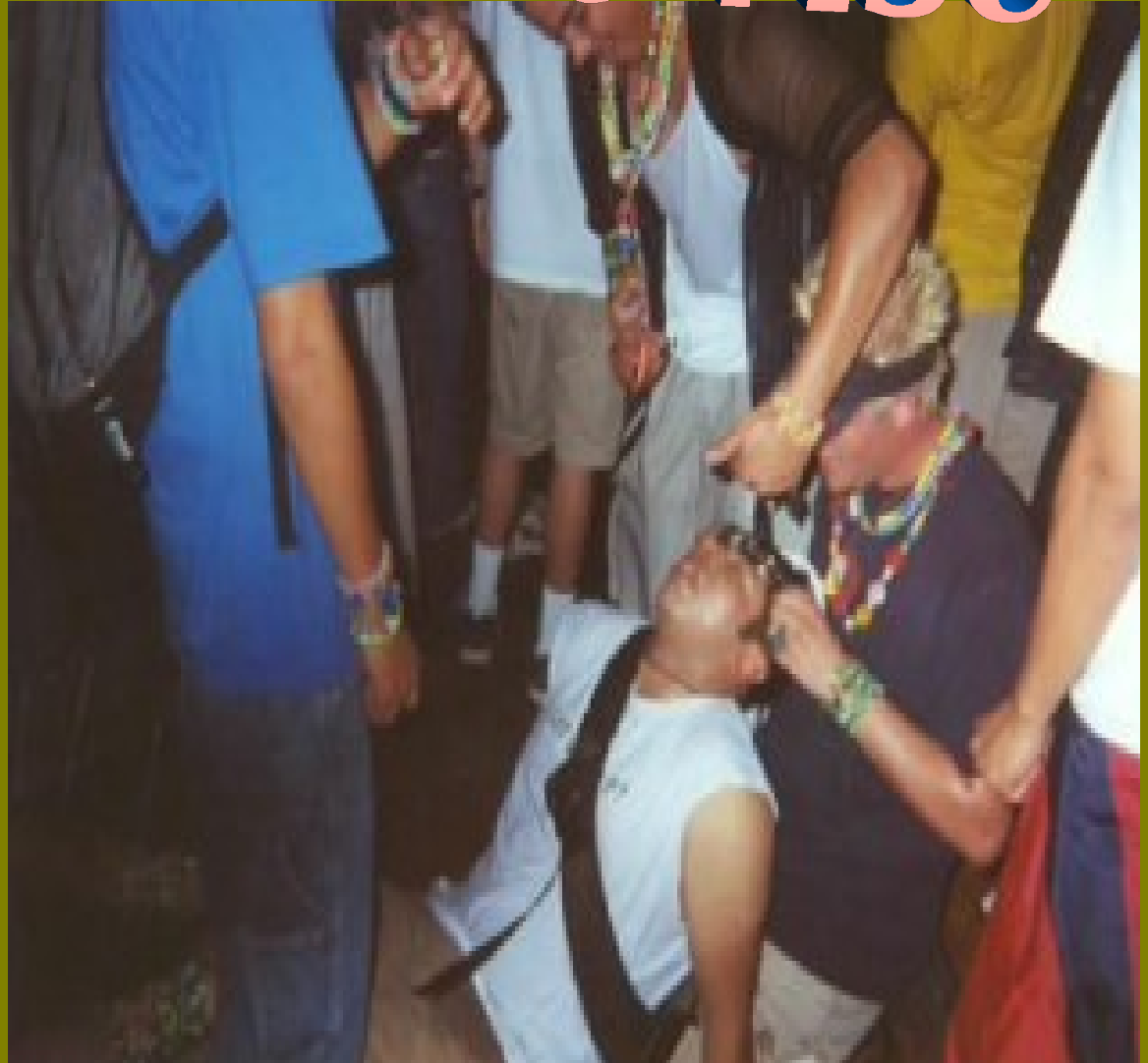
- jaw clenching and teeth grinding
- increased heart rate, blood pressure, and body temperature
- eye wiggles, tightened muscles, nervousness
- sweating, chills, nausea
- next-day sleepiness



# *Drugs on the rise*

Nearly **50%** of all of America's teens, at one point or another in year 2000, has tried Ecstasy.

Over **1/4** of the American teen population, year 1999, has tried Ecstasy.



# What's the Problem?

- Bigger and bigger doses needed to sustain the effect
- BAD THINGS can happen



# the giving drug

**What ECSTASY gives  
you....**



plain brain  
brain after  
Ecstasy

**1. Brain Damage**

**2. Permanent  
memory loss**

**3. Heart damage**

**Brain blood flow**

A photograph in the background shows a person lying on the ground, possibly unconscious, being attended to by several people. One person is leaning over them, and others are standing nearby. The scene appears to be outdoors, possibly at a public event or a street. The image is somewhat blurry and has a low resolution.

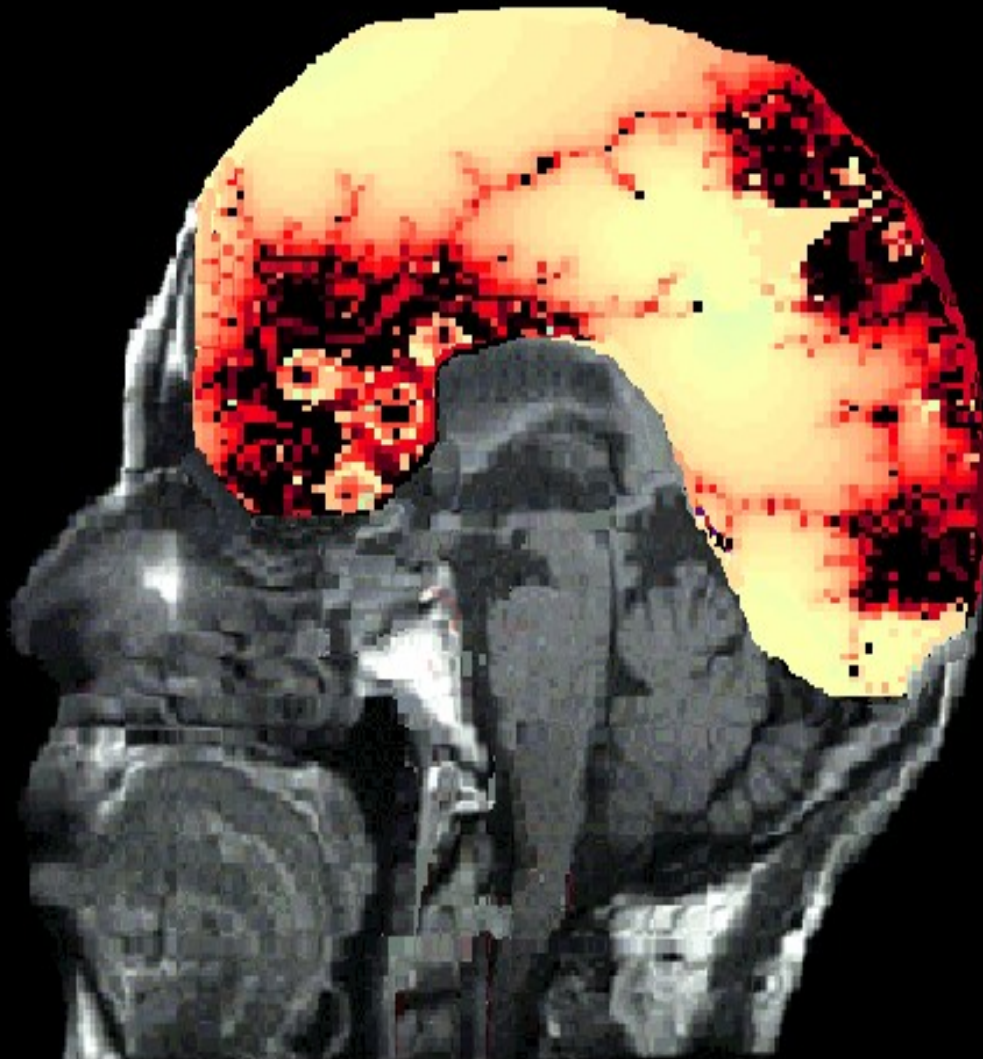
**CAUSES.....**

**HEAT EXHAUSTION**

**HEAT STROKE**

**SEIZURES**

**Death**



**5,200** annual  
ecstasy related  
deaths,

**Possession:** 7 years  
to life,

**Selling:** Life,  
without parole

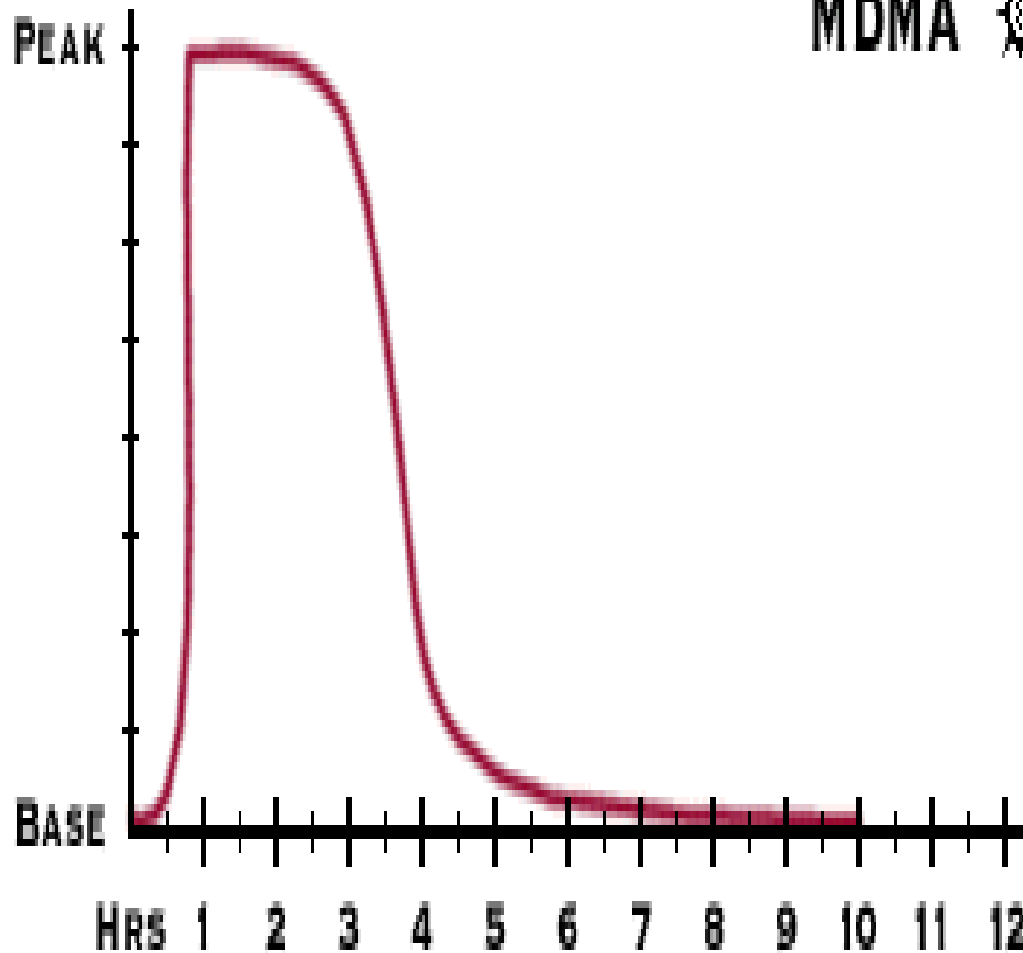
# Increase in Problems

- 500% increase in emergency room visits due to Ecstasy from 1993-1997



# The Highs and

## Lows



### • Onset:

20 - 75 minutes  
(depending on form)

### • Coming up:

5 - 20 minutes

### • Plateau:

2 - 3 hours

### • Coming down:

"Crash"

1 - 2 hours

### • After effects:

3 - 24 hours



# Short-term problems

- Exhaustion
- Memory Loss
- Anxiety, Paranoia, and Depression
- Heat stroke or cardiac arrest death
- Dehydration



# Long-term problems

- Brain damage and memory loss
- Depression
- Difficulty sleeping
- Diseases of the kidney, liver, ovaries/testes, heart, and blood
- Psychological dependence



# Severe

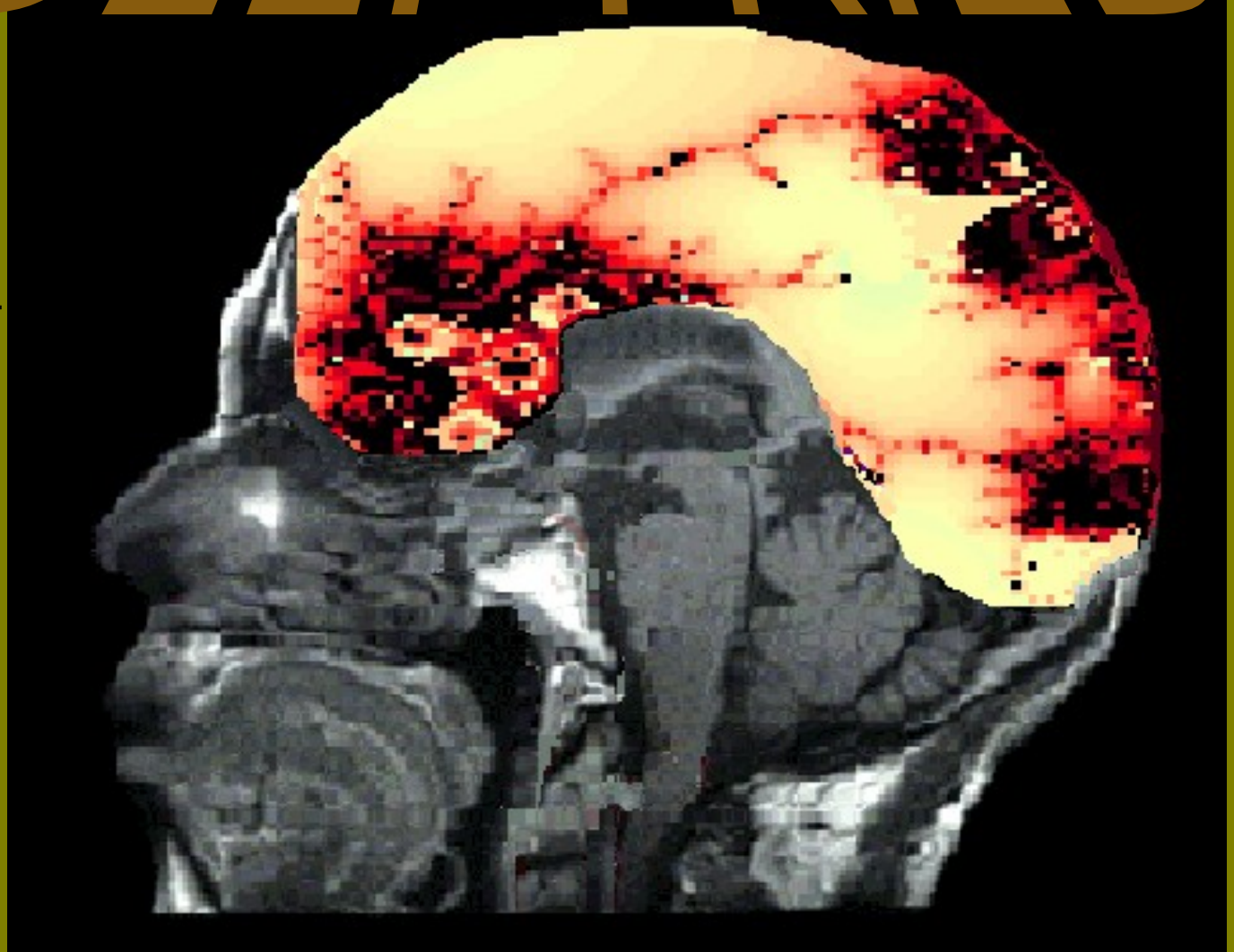
# Problems

- Cardiac Arrest and Death
- Hypertension
- Memory loss
- Severe dehydration/Heat Exhaustion
- Seizures
- Stroke
- **Death**



# DEEP FRIED

Ecstasy  
“fries”  
your  
brain.  
The brain  
starts to  
break  
down  
when  
oxygen is  
depleted,  
temperat  
ure  
elevates



# The Trade-off

- Short-term pleasure – but then you crash, and then one to two days of “burn out.”
- Long-term brain damage, dependence, sleep problems, anxiety, depression, and possibly death.



# ILLEGAL

- Ecstasy can be detected by military drug testing program.
- Ecstasy use is drug abuse and is a UCMJ punishable offense.
- Fact: Navy Drug Screening Labs test every urine sample for Ecstasy (MDMA)



# **BOTTOM LINE**

- Ecstasy use on the rise
- **SIGNIFICANT** medical consequences
- Can be lethal
- Attractive to our junior people: constant reminders, contact leadership essential to minimize use



# QUESTIONS

????????





# References

- Awareness Training on Ecstasy, Navy Personnel Command, Drug Detection and Deterrence Branch.  
<http://navdweb..spawar.navy.mil>
- National Institute on Drug Abuse  
[www.drugabuse.gov](http://www.drugabuse.gov)
- National Clearinghouse for Alcohol and Drug Information [www.health.org](http://www.health.org)

